

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2531

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PDIP, VE, NA, NL

SUBJECT: CABINET CRISIS END IN SIGHT; VISIT OF DUTCH FORMIN;
NA/VENEZUELAN RELATIONS

REF: A) 75 CURACAO A-47; B) 75 CURACAO 684

1. GOVERNMENT CRISIS IN NA APPEARS PAST. ARUBA'S PPA EXPECTED TO JOIN PM EVERTSZ' COALITION SHORTLY, TRADING ITS 3 STATEN VOTES FOR 3 MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS (JUSTICE, FINANCE, AND EDUCATION) PREVIOUSLY HELD BY ARUBA'S MEP. FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF CABINET NOMINATIONS NOT YET MADE, ALTHOUGH PPA LEADER LEO CHANCE AND MAX CROES SEEM CERTAIN FOR JUSTICE AND FINANCE MINISTRIES. STATEN PRESIDENT FIGAROA (MEP) HAS THUS FAR REFUSED TO SCHEDULE STATEN MEETING AND SOME SPECULATE THAT HE WILL CONTINUE TO STALL UNTIL MAY WHEN HIS TERM EXPIRES. MEANWHILE, SIX EXISTING GNA MINISTERS CONTINUE TO RUN GOVERNMENT WITH VOGES ASSUMING INTERIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR JUSTICE, POURIER FOR FINANCE, PIETERNELLA FOR EDUCATION, AND EVERTSZ FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS.

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2. COMMENT: PM EVERTSZ IS OBVIOUSLY NOW MORE COMFORTABLE

WITH PPA AS A PARTNER THAN WITH MEP. PPA'S ENTRY WILL FORCE HIM TO REDISTRIBUTE POWER WITHIN THE COALITION SLIGHTLY. IN ORDER TO KEEP BALANCE BETWEEN PPA AND FOL, BOTH WITH 3 STATEN SEATS, FOL'S AMOS NITA WILL BE FIGAROA'S REPLACEMENT AS PRESIDENT OF THE STATEN, GIVING FOL 1 PORTFOLIO (GODETT AS MINISTER OF LABOR) AND THE STATEN PRESIDENCY TO BALANCE

PPA'S 3 PORTFOLIOS. PPA'S ENTRY WILL GIVE THE COALITION 1- OF 22 STATEN VOTES, A COMFORTABLE GOVERNING MAJORITY, HOWEVER 2 SHORT OF THE 2/3 MAJORITY NEEDED FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES. END COMMENT.

3. SYMBOLIC OF PM EVERTSZ' SENSE OF SECURITY IS HIS ATTACK ON WHAT HE CONSIDERS MEDDLING IN NA'S INTERNAL POLITICS BY VENEZUELAN VICE CONSUL ON ARUBA, ROMULO NUCETTE, WHO ACCOMPANIED MEP'S OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER POLITICAL JUNKETS TO VENEZUELA. (SEE REF. A.) EVERTSZ HAS DENOUNCED THESE JUNKETS A UNCONSTITUTIONAL ENCROACHMENT ON GON RESPONSIBILITY FOR NA FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND ON JAN. 12 ISSUED A STATEMENT THAT, BECAUSE OF MEDDLING IN NA INTERNAL AFFAIRS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VENEZUELAN CONSULATE GENERAL ON ARUBA, NEW AND STRONGER REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN CONSULS WERE NECESSARY, AND THAT VIOLATIONS COULD BE PUNISHED BY DECLARING THE OFFENDER PERSONA NON GRATA. VENEZUELAN CONSUL GENERAL ON ARUBA, CACIQUE PLATA (NUCETTE'S SUPERIOR), HAS DENIED ANY PERSONAL WRBNGDOING, HOWEVER, AND THE PRESS HAS BEGUN FREE-WHEELING SPECULATION THAT FIRST CACIQUE PLATA AND THEN NUCETTE WOULD BE DECLARED PNG.

4. DUTCH FONMIN VAN DER STOEL, NOW IN CARACAS TO DISCUSS TERRITORIAL DEMARCATION BETWEEN THE NA AND VENEZUELA AND OTHER ISSUES AFTER A SHORT VISIT IN CURACAO JAN. 10-11, HAS APPARENTLY RAISED THE MATTER WITH VENEZUELAN FONMIN ESCOVAR SALOM. LOCAL RADIO REPORT JAN. 16 NOTED THAT EXCOVAR SALOM HAS ANNOUNCED QTE ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES UNQTE IN ARUBA AND CURACAO CONSULATES GENERAL. (HOWEVER, WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY IMPROPER ACTIVITIES NEWLY ARRIVED VENEZUELAN CONSUL GENERAL HERE.) LOCAL PRESS REPORTS OF FONMIN MEETINGS ARE NONSUBSTANTIVE, BUT INDICATE THAT QTE GOOD ATMOSPHERE OF THE OFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN (THE TWO FONMINS) HAS BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MAINTAINED IN SPITE OF THE STRANGE PROCEDURES OF THE VENEZUELAN (VICE) CONSUL IN ARUBA....UNQTE IN THIS CONTEXT, VAN DER STOEL HA REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED ASSURANCES FROM HIS VENEZUELAN COLLEAGUE THAT VENEZUELA WILL RESPECT NA INTERNAL INTEGRITY AND SUPPORT PRESENT ANTILLEAN CONFIGURATION.

5. COMMENT: VAN DER STOEL, THROUGHOUT HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH NA OFFICIALS, ADHERED TO THE GON'S WELL KNOWN COMMITMENT TO

DEAL ONLY WITH A UNITED ANTILLES. IN A HEATED DISCUSSION
WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF ARUBA'S MEP CONTROLLED ISLAND COUNCIL
ON JAN. 11 (APPARENTLY CONTINUED AS FAR AS ARUBA STOPOVER
ENROUTE TO CARACAS), THIS POSITION ELICITED A STATEMENT FROM
HENDRIK CROES (BETICO CROES' BROTHER AND FORMER MEP MINISTER OF
ECUCATION AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS) THAT ARUBA WOULD
CONTINUE TO PURSUE HER INDEPENDENCE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL
CONTACTS. WHILE IT REMAINS UNCLEAR WHETHER VAN DER STOEL
WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERTSZ' ATTACK ON THE ACTIONS OF THE
VENEZUELAN VICE CONSUL ON ARUBA, THE TIMING WAS CONVENIENT
SINCE DECLARING A FOREIGN CONSULAR OFFICER PNG IS CONSIDERED
IN THE PURVIEW OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AND WOULD REQUIRE HIS
ACTIVE APPROVAL.
HANSON

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